

# Christianity and Crisis

*A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion*

Volume IV, No. 3

March 6, 1944

\$1.50 per year; 10 cents per copy

## The Church's Support of the Chaplains

SOME months since, this journal called attention to the necessity of a more vigorous support of the work of the chaplains in the army by the churches, particularly by the organs of united Protestantism. We suggested that a strong staff of religious leaders of national repute should be engaged in establishing and maintaining constant contact with the chaplains; in arranging for retreats and conferences in which the chaplains could consult with one another and with tried leaders of the Church; and in providing more adequate literature for their use, particularly literature dealing with the meaning of the world crisis from the standpoint of the Christian faith.

Since that time some things have been accomplished and efforts have been made to enlarge and strengthen the support of united Protestantism for the chaplains' work. We believe however that it is still "too little" and that it may come "too late."

Through a wide correspondence and personal contact with chaplains, partly prompted by our editorial campaign, we have been reinforced in our conviction that the Church is not fully awake to the responsibilities and opportunities afforded by its religious ministry to the more than ten million men in our armed forces. From this correspondence we summarize the following important problems facing chaplains for which they require more help than is now given them.

1. Chaplains, chosen and trained by their various denominations, are called upon to engage in a ministry to men of many different denominations of Protestantism. The very heterogeneity of our religious culture prevents the army leadership in the chaplain's corps from going very far in giving aid to chaplains. They ought to have much more opportunity for common counsel in developing worship services, which might be acceptable to the largest possible number of men.

2. Without constant contact with the Church, the chaplains are in danger of becoming mere morale officers in the army. They are obviously a part of a great military machine. Their relation to the Church is less obvious, and less vital. The work of the chaplains in the armies which are actually embat-

tled takes on a new significance and also receives a much higher appreciation from men and officers. But in the armies being trained in our camps, the chaplain is frequently quite isolated. Conditions vary from command to command and from unit to unit so that generalizations are difficult. But it is a very great error to imagine that men in the army are flocking to the religious services. The percentage of Protestants who attend service in the army is certainly not higher than in civilian life, on the whole. In many units the work of the chaplain is confined to poorly attended services and to the difficult task of offering sympathy to men, turned over to him by other officers, whom he is powerless to help with more than sympathy. Officers are on the whole conspicuous by their absence in Protestant services. Catholic officers do of course attend Catholic services. The Catholic chaplains receive a stronger support both from their Church and from their own officers in the army than Protestant chaplains.

3. According to army rule, sermons are never censored; but there is a general atmosphere of either indifference or hostility toward any discussion of the larger issues of the conflict from the Christian point of view. This is the more regrettable because the American Army has so few facilities for interpreting the larger meaning of this conflict. Discussion groups are gradually springing up in various units, but the number of units which have them is still infinitesimal. The peril in such a situation is that sermons degenerate into harmless homilies in which pious patriotism and pious personal moralizing are mixed in equal proportions.

The chaplains find themselves in a situation in which the word of caution which Amaziah the priest spoke to Amos the prophet is subtly and implicitly brought home to them: "Prophesy not again at Bethel; for this is the king's chapel and it is the king's court."

Undoubtedly a very large number of chaplains are able by the grace of God and native endowment to rise above these temptations to preach the word of God in its full power, to mediate the divine mercy to perplexed souls, and to portray the divine majesty which rises above the majesty of nations and empires

and brings all things under judgment. But there is precious little reinforcement for such a ministry from the Church as such.

There are two primary reasons for the ineffectiveness of the Church in giving support to the chaplains. The first reason reaches into the past. A large part of the Protestant Church, up until the very time we entered into the war, was afraid to involve the Church "in the war system." The Church as a whole tended to defer to this group within its membership. Adequate preparations for the religious ministry in the armed forces were therefore not made. The ironic consequence of keeping the Church out of the war system through a policy of inaction is that the Church becomes more deeply involved because it does not adequately protect its ministers from the danger of being engulfed in the ethos of a great military establishment.

The other reason for our ineffectiveness is the divided character of Protestantism and the consequent fear of offending denominational susceptibilities. We can do little to undo the past but much can still be done to overcome the second cause of weakness. A Church which has a proper sense of contrition for the offense against Christ of our unholy divisions, could strengthen the interdenominational agencies which support the chaplains. It could provide a stronger and abler leadership through those agencies for the chaplains and could link them more vitally with the Church. It could also speak in their behalf to army and government authorities, as Roman Catholic authorities do, whenever issues arise which demand such intervention. It is for such a policy that we must continue to plead until the present unsatisfactory situation is remedied.

## Can Christianity Become an Effective Historical Force?

J. H. OLDHAM

IT has been my privilege to watch at close quarters from its early beginnings the movement towards growing international Christian cooperation, first, in the International Missionary Council, later in the movements of Faith and Order and Life and Work which were stimulated by it, and finally in the steps for the formation of a World Council of Churches. Towards the end of a life-time of close association with these movements I have come to realize that encouraging and fruitful as has been the progress in the sphere of organization, there is still lacking an *inner* unity of a common understanding of the historical task which confronts Christianity today.

What I have in mind is not the questions relating to the content of the Christian faith in itself with which the Faith and Order movement is concerned but whether there is any distinctive Christian attitude towards the direction which contemporary secular society is taking.

This question has become acute and urgent because the totalitarian tendencies of modern society, which are operative in the democracies as well as under dictatorships, are a growing menace to the existence of the human person and of community. If these are destroyed, Christianity is denied the opportunity of expressing its vital meaning.

It is possible for much individual wickedness to

prevail in society, without the natural human order being gravely perverted from its true purposes. In that case, the Church can concentrate its main energies on preaching its Gospel of *redemption*. But when the existence of man as man is threatened, as it is by powerful tendencies today, the Church has to devote a large part, perhaps the major part, of its strength to resisting and overcoming the forces which threaten to destroy God's work in *creation*.

There are few signs that the churches as a whole are sufficiently aware of this responsibility. Nor does there appear to be any common understanding of the crucial points at which Christian faith is at issue with the dominant tendencies of our time.

I have often asked myself what conclusions a visitor from another planet would reach, if he came to earth to discover what purposes mankind was pursuing and, in particular, what Christians stand for in the present historical situation. If he studied communist literature and talked with communist leaders, he could probably get a fairly clear notion of what they are aiming at. But, if he had the kind of mind which is not satisfied with phrases, but insists on asking what reality lies behind them and what action they imply, I cannot think that by reading a mass of Christian publications or by talking to a few score of Christian leaders he would be left in any other state than one of confusion. The question

has been forced on my mind by editing the *Christian News-Letter* for four years. I have never been able to assure myself that I was expressing any considerable body of *common* conviction. I once said in heat to a diverse group of friends with whom I have been intimately associated for a period of years that if any *two* of them would agree about anything I would gladly put the *Christian News-Letter* at their disposal and feel that at least a beginning had been made in transcending a purely individualistic standpoint.

It is possible that this state of things is inevitable. The historical situation may be too vast and manifold to be grasped in its entirety by finite minds. Individuals may be able to see only a small part of the whole, and the task of fitting together that which each sees to make a single picture may be too great. But if this is so, it is a source of great weakness. It means that the Christian forces are unable to act together in the pursuit of a common, clearly perceived purpose and are condemned thereby to ineffectiveness.

The master of Balliol has said recently with reference to the influence of the utilitarians in English history that they are an outstanding example of what may be accomplished by a comparatively small band of men who "read the signs of the times, are united in their principles and aims, and have thought out and can preach a systematic but fundamentally simple doctrine." Each of these phrases is pregnant with meaning. Is it beyond the power of Christians to achieve something similar today?

While outwardly we seem to live in a chaos of conflicting and unrelated individual opinions, a common faith and purpose may be taking form beneath the surface and may be nearer to the birth than we suppose. I have had for some time a growing feeling that the Christian minds which have steeped themselves most deeply in the present situation in the endeavor to discover its true meaning are, in spite of very diverse presentations and forms of expression, seeing the essential things in substantially the same way. This fact, if it is a fact, is obscured, partly by the difficulty of recognizing that approaches from very different angles to an extraordinarily complex situation do in fact converge to a common center; and partly by the fact that those who write books tend, very naturally, to direct the discussion to questions which are still in dispute and to take more or less for granted the matters of agreement. The time may have come when it is our business to say loudly, insistently and repeatedly, until the public fully takes it in, that over against the pagan and secular tendencies which are dominant in our society, there are certain convictions shared by many Christian minds that are of much greater importance than the matters about which agreement among Christians has not yet been reached. If it is

true that our hypothetical visitor from another planet would find it very difficult, as things now are, to get a clear answer to the question what Christians stand for in the secular world, is it possible to take steps which would ensure that, if he came back in five or ten years' time, he would find the position greatly improved?

The matter was presented somewhat in this form to the Archbishop of Canterbury some months ago, and he consented to take the initiative in an effort to ascertain the extent of agreement among Christian thinkers regarding the crucial issues which concern Christians in the modern world. The first results of this attempt are embodied in a Supplement which the Archbishop contributed to the *Christian News-Letter* of December 29th, 1943. At his request earlier drafts of the statement were submitted to a number of Christian thinkers representing different Christian traditions and schools of thought, not simply in writing but in long conversations and in group discussions. These revealed a measure of agreement that surprised those who took part. Though the group that was consulted was mainly, though not exclusively, British, the mind and attitude of many of those who contributed had been largely formed by philosophical and theological writers on the continent of Europe and in America, in both of which there is, perhaps, more original and creative thought at the present time than in Great Britain.

The Archbishop in his statement defines the basic attitude of Christians in relation to the main tendencies of our time in five fundamental "decisions" which are the Christian's response to the ultimate realities that environ human life. These are in essence perceptions of the true nature of reality, but the Archbishop calls them "decisions" because, as expressing the individual's response, they are "acts of faith, resting on a deliberate choice and involving a specific determination of the will."

The effort here described is an attempt to find an answer to three crucial questions, and our estimate of its significance will depend on the importance we attach to these questions.

First, is there, in fact, a fundamental agreement about the major choices involved in the restoration of human society to health and the side in those choices to which Christians are committed by their faith? Whether this agreement exists or not is a question of ascertainable fact. The result thus far has been encouraging. Two men, whose theological positions are ordinarily regarded as poles apart, each said to me that while he might wish to make some qualifications, or to express things a little differently, at this or that point, the statement as a whole commanded his complete assent and was an adequate statement of the faith by which he wished to live. But the range of consultation has been too narrow



to justify final conclusions. The publication of the paper is a step towards following up the matter further. This will be done in the coming months in Great Britain and, in so far as circumstances permit, and friends in other countries are willing to cooperate, also internationally.

But, if this effort is made, we need to be clear what it is we are seeking. This leads to the second, more difficult and searching question: Do these "decisions" take us beyond mere intellectual assent, often indolently and perfunctively given, and compel us to take sides in the actual conflicts of modern society? No one who understands the question will answer it lightly; indeed the answer cannot be given in words but only in life. If the decisions are not of such a nature as to set us in sharp opposition to dominant tendencies of our age, they are of little importance; and the statement will not achieve its purpose but will be only one among the multitude of pronouncements of recent years which, however excellent their intention and however admirable their matter, have had little appreciable effect in changing the course of history.

It is with this "existential" or practical aspect of the affirmations that those who have assisted in the preparation of the statement have been principally concerned. The form which the question has often taken in conversation is: If you were, or are, in the early thirties and had reached the conclusion that human society was on the way to destroy itself, to what ends would you wish to give your life in the hope that you might be able in old age to look out on a world in which things had changed for the better?

It is the conviction of those who took part in preparing the document that, in the early stages at any rate, it is much more important that the implications of the fundamental decisions should be understood, accepted and worked out by a small group than that large numbers should be enrolled. The effect of a premature attempt to secure the latter would be to devitalize and cheapen the decisions, and so to make them insignificant. In the long run the influence of a set of convictions depends on the force with which they are held and the thoroughness with which their implications are worked out. A relatively small body of people who had made up their minds where they stand and knew where they wanted to go might, through their collective actions, writings and speech, exert an appreciable influence on the mind and temper of their time.

We are thus brought to the third question, whether the decisions (which remain in the sphere of religious belief and do not commit those who make them to any particular social and political program) are definite and significant enough, sufficiently concrete and practical, to constitute an effective bond of union, so that those who share this common faith and are bound by this common loyalty form a suffi-

ciently cohesive body to become a recognizable force in history.

Professor W. E. Hocking in a small volume published not long before the war called attention to the significance of the emergence on the continent of Europe of the "party," and suggested that the blind spot of the older liberalism was its failure to recognize the need for a common purpose in public life and its consequent neglect of what he called the "commotive function." By this he meant the function that enables people to move and act together. No one who understands how large a part technical knowledge and rational judgment play, and must play, in all social and political decisions, would dream of proposing the formation of a Christian political party, which would aim, like the communist or Nazi party, at seizing and exercising political power. Probably it is best in order to avoid dangerous confusion to refrain in general public discussion from using the term "party" at all. But perhaps in the context of this paper it is possible to use an illustration from the rise of political parties without the risk of being misunderstood. The question which, in the present state of the world, seems to call for earnest consideration is whether, without demanding commitment to particular political and social programs, there can come into existence in the sphere of religious belief a body of conviction, sufficiently powerful and passionate and at the same time, *involving sufficiently definite decisions and obligations in the practical sphere*, to enable those who share these convictions to affect appreciably the course of history.

If this is to come about it will not be by the arbitrary choice of individuals or of any group, but only through the gift of grace. It will not be primarily an ethical movement, but one that is in the deepest sense religious, deriving its force and inspiration from a fresh apprehension of the ultimate truth of human existence.

But I believe it to be also true that the result will not be achieved unless its necessity becomes so clearly apparent that we are willing to pay the price of achieving it by the necessary self-discipline. I have come increasingly to feel that a chief cause of our present paralysis is a dissipation of spiritual and intellectual interest. The world is so full of a number of things that we flit, like butterflies, from one fascinating idea or topic or book to the next in an unending series, and fail in consequence to achieve any common purpose. It is, so far as I can see, indispensable for the achievement of such a purpose that out of the multitudes of ideas and interests that jostle one another in our minds a very few should acquire a different status from the others and become key conceptions and ruling decisions, which we *know* to be such not only for ourselves but for a growing company of our fellow-Christians. The Archbishop's

statement is intended to help us to emancipate ourselves from the process of going round in circles and failing to get anywhere.

There are two possible reactions to the statement. The first is to find it highly interesting, to be excited about it for some weeks or months, and then to start chasing some new hare. The other is to stay by the statement until one has either rejected the plan as a whole, because it is wrongly conceived, as it may be, or rejected particular decisions, because one does not agree with them, or else deliberately and whole-heartedly adopted the decisions as ruling principles of thought and conduct, and by that act enrolled oneself in the company of those for whom these same decisions are the guide of life.

I hope that it is clear that I am not, in anything I have said, commending the statement on account of its merits, which is a matter to be judged individually by those who read it; nor on the ground that it is written by the Archbishop of Canterbury, though anything that comes from him as Chairman of the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches has a special claim for attention; still less for the reason that those who have collaborated in the statement are mainly a British group, since they would be the first to acknowledge what they owe to non-British thinkers. My sole concern has been to ask what is the nature of the technique which will assist us to arrive at the goal which is the theme of this paper.

Nothing could be further from the intention of the statement than to seek assent in detail to the present formulation. The ultimate and fundamental things in human life are inexhaustible in meaning, and can consequently find expression in a host of different ways, no one of which is markedly superior to others. What is desired is a man-to-man understanding of what matters most, which can be achieved far better in personal, face-to-face intercourse, than by means of printed documents. It would be quite wrong to try to impose a particular theology or philosophy on the Christian world. What the statement is concerned with is the ultimate apprehensions of reality which underlie all theologies and philosophies that can claim to be Christian—what Karl Mannheim in his *Diagnosis of Our Time* has called "paradigmatic experiences," by which in the last resort our adjustments to life are determined. Are there such Christian paradigmatic experiences through sharing in which men know themselves to be united in the deepest region to one another in a common purpose and are able through that unity of purpose to leave their mark on history? And if so, by what means can these conceptions be made to stand out from the host of other interests that they become ruling and organizing ideas and give form and shape to the consciousness of an age?

## Foxhole Religion

*This article is published anonymously for obvious reasons. The author has had wide contacts with the army and with chaplains in both branches of the service. We believe the observations to be of great importance, particularly as an antidote to the general complacency about the religious situation in the army.*

High-powered publicity departments of both the Army and the Navy Chaplain's Corps plus the well-meaning reports of some zealous chaplains have given the people the impression there is a religious upsurge or "revival" among the men of the armed services. There are numerous publications of statistics to verify this impression. However, carefully analyzed and broken down these figures are not so impressive and certainly do not justify the term "revival."

It is very true that in army induction centers and navy training stations the attendance rate is high. This may be explained variously as due to the navy system of compulsory attendance for all recruits, the novelty of a military service to the inductee, and the desire to heal the recent breach with home. It is also true that there is a gradual rise as the men enter combat training, and it usually continues until their first experience under fire.

There are other factors that should be kept in mind in considering the statistical upsurge, such as: the greater number and higher calibre of chaplains in this war over the last; the official cognizance of religion in army and navy regulations; the pronounced statements on religion by numerous high military leaders. All of this framework should be, and in many cases is, encouraging to the religious work among the men. It perhaps could be called progress. To the uninitiated it constitutes a "revival" when taken together with astronomical figures of attendance.

It is with all this in mind that realistic chaplains call attention to defects, which, when taken in their true importance, make the framework and figures appear like a well-formed shell around a rotten kernel.

Though the army and navy officially encourages religion, in actual practice, its place in military life depends on the commanding officer of the ship, base, regiment, or other unit large enough to have a chaplain. For example, nothing but military necessity should interfere with the conducting of divine services. The interpretation of what is "military necessity" lies with the commanding officer. A regimental drill, inspection, exercises or working party often interferes with services on the grounds of "necessity." Even line officers jokingly remark at the large percentage of times that a ship leaves or enters port, or a regiment begins a maneuver on Sunday. In practice the professional militarist does not regard religion as a "necessity," i.e., as essential in helping to win the war.

Noticeably absent at most divine services are the officers themselves. The importance of this cannot be underestimated because the correlation between the attendance of the men with that of their leaders is evident to most chaplains. One regimental commander



was present at divine services three times in a year. The effect was noticeable. His successor was strongly invited to attend by the chaplain. He came. The increase in attendance of both officers and men was thereby stimulated. So often are the officers not present however, that the men often mention it to the chaplains as their reason for non-attendance.

It is generally felt that being under fire in combat operations increases the religious interest. "There are no atheists in foxholes" has gone the rounds so often that few have dared question this well-worn story of human nature. We leave unchallenged the observation that men turn to God in fear, frustration, or desperation as well as in true faith and humility. Chaplains do not worry about this. What is a constant perplexity is the reversion after combat to escapes and indulgences totally unworthy of their battlefield religious experience. As one Catholic chaplain said. "All the fervor induced by proximity to sudden and violent death is all too soon dissipated and God, whose benign Providence brought them back safely, is seemingly forgotten while men seek this and that indulgence. . . . Pity not the chaplain who works under fire—he is as happy as can be . . . let your sympathy seek out the chaplains who must contend with the religious apathy so prevalent where men have been removed from the dangers of the combat zone."

Here is the real testing ground for genuine religious momentum. Is God to be like an overcoat, donned in cold weather but cast aside with the first signs of spring? The chaplain is only too glad to encourage and solidify a resurgence to God. But he can hardly label a "life insurance" type of religion as a revival. The decrease in attendance after combat and the obvious reversion from religion is proof enough that, on the whole, it is a form of "insurance" and not "assurance" that the men have felt.

The effect of such a religious atrophy among men who have been in combat is only too evident in their moral life. It is axiomatic to say that where there is no religion there are no morals. A decided increase in vulgarity, petty thievery, drunkenness, and sexual promiscuity appears among both officers and men. Decency, nobility of character, and even good manners take a back seat while their successors try to outdo themselves in their recklessness. Caught in this whirlpool of dissipation there are few that come out unscathed.

Officially this substitute for religious standards is winked at. For such men there are few if any decent places of recreation and all encouragement, both by word and by example, is given to the destruction of character. Lest the reader think this is a "puritanical" observation let us cite the treatment given to the most pronounced moral problem: sex.

Upon three occasions organizations within one of our better known armies set up government-sponsored brothels. The houses were referred to as "recreational centers." The arrangements, including the procuring of the "receptionists," was handled by the medical and special service departments. On one occasion no passes were given to leave the bivouac area except to visit this house and the chaplain had to contend with the

nearby traffic to and from the house as he conducted services. The whore house was opened on Sunday and ran day and night, being the chief topic of conversation at mess for some time.

From a medical point of view the venture was officially justified but, as is so often the case, the problem was regarded as primarily a medical and only secondarily (if at all) a moral problem. There was no condemnation, no social stigmatism attached to the visits. On the other hand, the officers themselves set up their separate house. Whenever the venereal disease rate rose, concern was shown for the reputation of the regiment from the standpoint of army prestige. Nevertheless, acting on the supposition that all cases were curable (an extremely doubtful supposition) the medical problem was not a great cause for alarm.

This attitude of commanding officers must never be overlooked for upon it depends, largely, the success or failure of the chaplain's work. A Catholic chaplain revealed that through the confessional he learned that fifty per cent of the men, who carried on sexual relations for the first time, did so because of the presence of an army whore house. Whereas at home they would have to meet social condemnation, the fear of revelation, or loss of position, they met the opposite attitude in the armed services. Sin became virtue and virtue was no more. Prestige depended upon dissipation and the flaunting of vice a mark of manliness. In a sex morality lecture a line officer, through the medium of a foul story, was even heard to equate fornication with fighting ability.

This would seem an exaggerated case, but most chaplains in combat areas have the same problem of wrestling with "spiritual wickedness in high places." Real encouragement of religion and morality in actual practice is the exception rather than the rule. Sometimes it is encouraged on one side and defeated on another. The appeal to the base nature in the men is excused on the grounds of the conditions they are living under, the need for an outlet of nervous energy, etc. In other words, the army-sponsored whore house became, in a real sense, the substitute for army-sponsored religion though, of course, no one would ever be so bold as to say so. Under such an attitude of carefully cloaked hypocrisy, a chaplain's position is next to impossible.

It is probably too much to expect the army and navy to be character building institutions. They do not exist for that purpose. But on the other hand they should not be character destroying institutions, and that is exactly what it amounts to in practical matters in combat areas. Not even the chaplains themselves have escaped this degeneracy, for even some of them have fallen. In most cases, however, there is always a remnant, led by the chaplain, who wait patiently the time when conditions will improve. The chaplain thus becomes a modern Isaiah.

Consider the effect such a returning generation has upon our nation. Perhaps the moral casualties will even outnumber the physical or the mental. To paraphrase Matthew 16:26, "For what is a nation profited, if it shall gain the whole world, and lose its own soul?" The prospect of another "roaring twenties" looming in post-war America cannot be wiped away by the talk

of a revival of religion. Religious apathy and immorality are already sweeping across defeated Italy and breaking Germany. One cannot be in Naples a single day without being appalled at the moral conditions, and letters found on prisoners reveal the same trend in Germany.

The answer to the problem within the armed services is not clear. What is clear is that the complacent bubble inflated by talk of a religious "revival" among

the men must be punctured. The problem must be dealt with both within and without. There must be a new attitude on the part of those in authority. As the war enters its third year with the end still not in view, the ties that bind men to home and church, to God and to high endeavors, will grow weaker and weaker in the face of the attitude expressed above. We can not be satisfied with foxhole religion. The obstacles are here. They have yet to be overcome.

## The World Church: News and Notes

### Recent Norwegian Resistance to Quisling Regime

There has been no let-up in the opposition of the Church of Norway, people as well as pastors, to the Nazi regime.

In addition to Bishop Berggrav, some twenty ordained ministers of the Norwegian Church are now under arrest. At the close of his sermon on Christmas morning Pastor Tori of Grue said a prayer for imprisoned and banished bishops and pastors. Immediately one of his listeners rose and left the church. A minute later the man returned, accompanied by a German police official who proceeded straight up to the altar, arrested the pastor and marched him out of the church and into a waiting motorcycle. Pointing out that a child was waiting to be baptized, the pastor sought to have the arrest delayed until after the service, but this was denied. When he asked the reason for his arrest, the German replied it was because he had prayed for bishops and pastors. Latest word was that Pastor Tori is being held prisoner at Kongsvinger fortress.

### Germans Deny Norwegian Pastor Right To Serve Imprisoned Students

When it became known in church circles in Norway that several hundred University of Oslo students, who had been arrested last November 30, were to be deported to concentration camps in Germany, a decision was reached to try to have a pastor accompany the deportees and to live with them in imprisonment abroad. Immediately four young pastors volunteered for the assignment, and the Rev. Einar Glöersen, secretary-general of the Christian Student Association, was selected.

However, permission to carry out the plan first had to be obtained from the Germans. Repeated requests were made, but not a single one of them elicited a response. The church leaders, according to a report from Norway, "have been unable to regard this silence as anything other than new evidence that the German overlords do not entertain the least respect or concern for the eternal values of the soul."

The message continues: "It now remains for the Church to follow the only course left open to it, perilous though it be. It has sent out an appeal to all Christians to participate in prayer for the Norwegian

student youth who for an indefinite period must slave on foreign soil in SS-camps."

The Nazis in Norway have strictly forbidden all prayers for Norwegians who are held prisoner by the Germans.

Declaring the University of Oslo had been a hotbed for anti-Nazi activity, the Germans late last fall staged a large-scale raid on the institution, arresting about 1,400 male students. More than half of these were later deported to Germany where, according to recent reports, they have been put into SS-uniforms and are to be trained as soldiers.

### Rabbi Brickner Wants More Army Education

Rabbi Barnett R. Brickner of Cleveland, Ohio, who has been visiting Jewish soldiers in our army in the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, Middle East, China, India and the European theatre of war, was recently interviewed in London and declared that one of his most definite impressions about the armed forces was that the army's orientation program was inadequate and had failed to give our men any clear picture of what they were fighting for.

Rabbi Bricker declared:

"I have the definite impression that our men are very muddled on the whole—muddled as to whom they are fighting against and even less clear on what they are fighting for.

"To me it is pathetic. I think our men are under a terrific disadvantage when you consider their enemy is madly indoctrinated with hate and fanaticism."

In some theatres, Rabbi Brickner said he ran up against commanding officers who contemptuously thought that orientation was "a lot of soft stuff" and did little if anything to further the work. The British, he said, are far ahead of us in their approach to the problem.

The American soldier is no intellectual child, Rabbi Brickner declared. He said he had found many thinking deeply on both the post-war and present economic and social problems. The spark of an intelligent approach to the war is within them and needs only proper guidance to channelize it into the right direction, he declared.

Rabbi Brickner's views, arrived at after the widest contacts with the army on all fronts, thus confirm the position this journal has taken on the inadequacy of the army educational program.

# Christianity and Crisis

*A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion*  
601 West 120th St., New York 27, N. Y.

## EDITORIAL BOARD

REINHOLD NIEBUHR, *Chairman*

JOHN C. BENNETT	RHODA E. MCCULLOCH
CHARLES C. BURLINGHAM	FRANCIS P. MILLER
F. ERNEST JOHNSON	EDWARD L. PARSONS
HENRY SMITH LEIPER	HOWARD C. ROBBINS
JOHN A. MACKAY	HENRY P. VAN DUSEN
DOROTHY CLEMENS, <i>Editorial Assistant</i>	

### Prayers for Dutch Patriots Sentenced to Death

Prayers for Dutch patriots sentenced to death by the Nazis were recently recited in the churches throughout Holland in response to the following appeal of church authorities:

"Many unknown occupation authorities have condemned a considerable number of Dutchmen to death. These men stand suddenly before the gates of eternity. Many prepared themselves for this and for meeting the Saviour by praying. For some eternity is still a dark passage without view of the beyond.

"In agreement with most of those condemned, some young Christians decided to ask you to kneel before God together with the condemned and ask God for light, strength, rest and inward peace for those soon entering eternity. They did what their consciences told them to do and are willing to accept the consequences. May God console those remaining behind in mourning. May he be merciful to our severely tried country."

### Spain Maintains Ban on Protestantism

The following cable was received from the World Council of Churches offices in Geneva with regard to the Protestant Church situation in Spain: "Most Protestant chapels are still closed, and no Protestant schools are allowed. There is compulsory Catholic religious education for Protestants in all State schools according to recent reports. There therefore does not appear to have been any change or improvement in the Protestant situation in Spain."

### Public Library

Woodward & Kirby Aves.

Detroit 2, Mich. 650 1-45

### Chaplain's Word to His Men

In a mimeographed bulletin sent to the men in his command, Chaplain Jule Ayers of the 36th Fighter Group, Army Air Base, Alamogordo, New Mexico, writes in part:

"The only way to victory over foes who have been taught to believe, and fanatically are sure, that they are destined to rule the world, is to become so acquainted with the Bible, the Hebrew-Christian tradition, and the moral basis of the culture of Western civilization (including the history and destiny of the United States of America) that one is fortified with the greatest conviction in the world. That conviction is that 6,000 years of human experience prove again and again that the universe is on the side of decency, that evil destroys itself, and that war victoriously won and peace mercifully established and cooperation and brotherhood hitherto impossible.

"Along with the laws of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and art, there are laws of human relationships which when they are learned and followed (as in the case of other laws of nature and of life) make possible health and achievement. Religion at its best, in the teaching and example of Moses, the prophets and Jesus, calls attention to the true laws of human relationships. . . ."

### Communications

You are doing a splendid piece of service in these difficult times in holding our minds steady and our faith firm.

Your little journal is giving its readers a real spiritual uplift just when we need it most. . . .

ERNEST T. EATON,  
Lieutenant-Governor, Montana.

. . . The quality of intellectual leadership afforded by *Christianity and Crisis* is of first importance. It is the only periodical of which I can say that I read every word of every issue. It is an antidote to that unhappy type of leadership whose confusion suggests "the blind leading the blind" and which would be humorous were it not for the final tragedy of falling into the "ditch" of moral futility. . . .

LOWELL M. ATKINSON,  
East Harford Circuit, Maryland.

### Author in This Issue

Dr. J. H. Oldham is editor of the Christian News-Letter, known to many of our readers. He is besides one of the most influential of the architects of the ecumenical movement. His service to the cause of the united Church runs from the great missionary conference in Edinburgh in 1910 to the Oxford Conference in 1937. The present paper may be regarded as a kind of supplement to the one by the Archbishop of Canterbury which we recently published.